

# CITY OF JERSEY CITY

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## ***Mayor Healy & OEM Call For Voluntary Evacuation of Low-Lying Areas City Setting Up Five Shelters at Public Schools with Potential to Open Additional Sites If Need Arises; Possibility of Mandatory Evacuation***

**JERSEY CITY** – Mayor Jerramiah T. Healy, in conjunction the **Office of Emergency Management**, announced today that the city is asking for all residents who live in low-lying areas, such as Downtown and Country Village, to voluntarily evacuate.

“If you have a place that you can go, either in the Heights or a suburb or area away from the coast that might not be as seriously affected, we are asking that you do that today,” said Mayor Healy. “There will be five emergency shelters open tomorrow morning where residents can go to and there still remains a possibility of a mandatory evacuation tomorrow.

Current forecasts from the **National Weather Service** indicate that Hurricane Irene could be a Category 2 storm when it reaches New Jersey, with winds as high as 100 miles per hour and rainfall anywhere between six and 12 inches. The storm is expected to hit Jersey City late Saturday into Sunday during a period of high tides, which could serve to compound the situation.

“We are closely monitoring this storm and are continuing to meet with representatives from all critical agencies, including area hospitals, to putting in place all of the necessary emergency preparedness plans,” said **Mayor Healy**. “We will keep our residents apprised of any and all necessary steps should a mandatory evacuation become necessary.”

Mayor Healy noted that the city has updated its evacuation routes and has evacuation plans in place should evacuation become necessary. Residents, however, should not wait until Saturday to pack their belongings, but should rather put together an emergency bag that can be taken with them should they need to relocate.

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OEM officials expect to make that determine by Saturday morning whether to mandatorily evacuate residents to the emergency shelters.

The five initial emergency shelters that would be opened are MS#4, 107 Bright Street, MS#7, 222 Laidlaw Avenue, PS#17, 600 Bergen Avenue, PS#38, 339 Stegman Parkway, and Dickinson High School, 2 Palisade Avenue. Any disabled or elderly residents who need transportation to one of the emergency shelters is asked to contact 201-547-5684.

Residents who park their vehicles underground or in low-lying areas are being told to move their vehicles to higher ground in anticipation of the storm. City emergency and public works vehicles will be staged at key locations throughout the city on Friday in advance of the storm.

**Parking rules will suspended citywide on Saturday, Sunday and Monday**, with the **exception of Monmouth Street between Grand Street and Newark Avenue**, where there will be no parking from 6 p.m. Saturday to 12 noon on Monday. That street will serve as a corridor for vehicles into and out of the Jersey City Medical Center.

Police Chief Thomas Comey is recommending **that all vehicular traffic cease at 12 midnight Saturday** into Sunday. The Chief does anticipate banning vehicular traffic in the early hours of Sunday under the terms and conditions of the State of Emergency.

“With the anticipation of Hurricane Irene arriving in our general vicinity late Saturday afternoon, vehicular traffic should be restricted between midnight Sunday through the duration of the storm or otherwise notified,” **Chief Comey** said. “With the expected increase in calls due to storm related incidents, we are concerned with our ability to respond to stranded motorists in a timely fashion, as stranded motorists will be properly prioritized.”

Currently, city officials – who have been monitoring Hurricane Irene since last week – are asking residents to remove any items that could become projectiles as a result of high winds, including patio furniture, grills, construction equipment, and bicycles. Inspectors from the Building Department and the Engineering Division have been in contact with all construction sites to notify them to remove any construction materials from worksites and roadways.

OEM officials are encouraging residents to have a preparedness kit ready with batteries, water, flashlights, and charged cell phones, as well as any immediate supplies such as food, medicines, and important papers. Senior citizens and residents who take medications daily should fill their prescriptions now in advance of the storm.

The MUA, in conjunction with the JCIA, has been clearing catch basins and sewers of debris to allow the water to go down during the storm. If there is a catch basin on your street that is covered with debris or garbage, please be a good neighbor and assist the city by clearing that catch basin.

**Garbage collection for Sunday night has been suspended** and will be rescheduled for Wednesday night.

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The city has received **10,000 sand bags** from the **U.S. Army Corps of Engineers** and has purchased 44 tons of sand for residents to fill the sand bags and bring to their homes to assist in basement flood prevention. Residents will be able to fill the bags from **8 a.m. to 12 noon at two locations – the Municipal Parking Lot on Montgomery and Orchard Streets and at the parking lot of MS#40, 88 Gates Avenue (Ocean and Gates Avenues).**

**EVACUATION ROUTES:**

<u>EAST DISTRICT</u>	<u>DIRECTION TO HEAD INTO</u>
Montgomery Street	(West)
Christopher Columbus Drive	(West)
Grand Street	(West)
14 <sup>th</sup> Street	(West)
Philips Street	(South)
NJ Turnpike	(South/West)
Pacific Avenue	(South)
<u>WEST DISTRICT</u>	
Summit Avenue	(North)
Rt. 440	(North)
Kennedy Blvd	(North)
Communipaw Ave	(West)
Belmont Ave	(West)
Sip Ave	(West)
<u>NORTH DISTRICT</u>	
RT 1/9	(North)
Kennedy Blvd	(North)
Palisade Ave	(North)
Manhattan Ave	(West)
Secaucus Road	(West)
Depressed Highway	(West)
<u>SOUTH DISTRICT</u>	
Ocean Avenue	(North)
Garfield Avenue	(North)
Kennedy Blvd	(North)
Danforth Ave	(North)
Culver Ave	(West)
Audubon Ave	(West)
Rt.169	(South)
Rt.185	(South)

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PSE&G will have emergency crews on hand to deal with any downed power lines. Residents are reminded that if a power line falls on their vehicle they should not exit the vehicle but immediately call 911.

You may need to survive on your own after a severe emergency. This means having your own food, water, and other supplies in sufficient quantity to last for at least three days. Local officials and relief workers will be on the scene after a disaster, but they cannot reach everyone immediately. You could get help in hours, or it might take days. In addition, basic services such as electricity, gas, water, sewage treatment, and telephones may be cut off for days, or even a week or longer.

**Recommended Items to Include in a Basic Emergency Supply Kit:**

- Water, one gallon of water per person per day for at least three days, for drinking and sanitation
- Food, at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food
- Battery-powered or hand crank radio and a NOAA Weather Radio with tone alert and extra batteries for both
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- First aid kit
- Whistle to signal for help
- Moist towelettes, garbage bags and plastic ties for personal sanitation
- Wrench or pliers to turn off utilities
- Can opener for food (if kit contains canned food)
- Local maps
- Cell phone with chargers, inverter or solar charger

**Additional Items to Consider Adding to an Emergency Supply Kit:**

- Prescription medications and glasses
- Infant formula and diapers
- Pet food and extra water for your pet
- Cash or traveler's checks and change
- Important family documents such as copies of insurance policies, identification and bank account records in a waterproof, portable container.
- Emergency reference material such as a first aid book or information from [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov).
- Sleeping bag or warm blanket for each person. Consider additional bedding if you live in a cold-weather climate.
- Complete change of clothing including a long sleeved shirt, long pants and sturdy shoes. Consider additional clothing if you live in a cold-weather climate.
- Household chlorine bleach and medicine dropper – When diluted nine parts water to one part bleach, bleach can be used as a disinfectant. Or in an emergency, you can use it to treat water by using 16 drops of regular household liquid bleach per gallon of water. Do not use scented, color safe or bleaches with added cleaners.
- Fire Extinguisher
- Matches in a waterproof container
- Feminine supplies and personal hygiene items
- Mess kits, paper cups, plates and plastic utensils, paper towels

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## **PETS & SHELTER ANIMALS**

Liberty Humane Society (LHS) is already taking precautions to safe guard their animals. LHS will have staff at the shelter to monitor the situation. If needed, Jersey City Animal Control Division is prepared to accommodate their evacuation needs as well as any of our residents by using the Jersey City Office of Emergency Management Mobile Animal Rescue trailer. This trailer will be hooked up to an animal control vehicle and will remove any at risk animals to higher ground. If needed, \*CART would be activated by the Hudson County Office of Emergency Management in the case of a large scale disaster in the county (terrorism, apartment building fire, hurricane, etc.).

*\*The Hudson County Animal Response Team (CART) is an all-volunteer group working under the direction of the Office of Emergency Management and in cooperation with the American Red Cross to implement a disaster plan for Hudson County's animals.*

For Pet Owners in case they have to evacuate with their pet(s):

### **A quick pet checklist:**

- One crate or pet carrier large enough that your pet can stand up, turn around and lie down comfortably. (Remember, this may be your pet's home for many days.)
- Medical records, veterinary contact information, and any medication your pet may need.
- Current photos and description of your pets.
  
- At least one week's supply of food, water, and litter. (Food should be stored in plastic, air-tight containers.
- A kitty litter scooper. Small, plastic bags for waste disposal, cleaning
- A sturdy leash, collar/harness
- A manual can-opener
- Grooming items
- Newspaper for cage lining, paper towels, and household bleach for cleaning
- Pet toys and bedding to reduce stress
- A kitty litter scooper

### **Contact these local groups for further information and assistance for animals:**

Jersey City Animal Control 201-547-4888

The Liberty Humane Society 201 547-4147

Assistance for Hudson County Hudson County Animal League 201 200-1008

For more information on Hurricane Irene, please continue to visit the city website at [www.jerseycitynj.gov](http://www.jerseycitynj.gov) and the city Facebook page.

**All media inquiries should be directed to Jennifer Morrill, Press Secretary to Mayor Jerramiah T. Healy at 201-547-4836 or 201-376-0699.///**